

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

1. (Amended) A graft polymer composition, which comprises at least two graft polymers including a first graft polymer and a second graft polymer, where each of said graft polymers are obtained by a process including the step of graft-polymerizing a monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component onto a main chain including a polyether portion and at least one of said first and second graft polymers have at least one end structural unit having at least one carbon atom, wherein the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component includes an unsaturated carboxylic monomer as an essential component,

with the graft polymer composition being characterized in that ~~there is a~~ the difference ~~of not less than 3 in~~ between the number of carbon atoms in the end structural unit ~~when the number of carbon atoms which compose each of said first graft polymer and the number of carbon atoms of an end structural unit of said second graft polymer is not less than 3, where said structural unit units are~~ located at both ends of the respective main chain is compared between two of the at least two graft polymers under the following conditions (i) and (ii) and where:

(i) said end structural unit of a respective graft polymer is defined as a portion ranging extending from an extremely located each end ether bond portion ~~to an end is defined as the end structural unit~~, and when there is a difference in number of carbon atoms between both the end structural units at each end of each the respective graft polymer, whichever is larger is defined as the number of carbon atoms in the end structural unit of the respective graft polymer is defined as the end structural units of the respective graft polymer having the largest number of carbon atoms; and

(ii) ~~when an end is a structural unit~~ a main chain of a polyether of a respective graft polymer is derived from an alkylene oxide alone, the number of carbon atoms in ~~this the~~ respective end structural unit of the respective graft polymer is defined as zero.

2. (Amended) A graft polymer composition according to claim 1, wherein the number of carbon atoms in ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the smallest number of carbon atoms ~~among the~~ of said end structural units ~~composing both ends of each end~~ of the respective main chains of the at least two graft polymers is not larger than 5.

3. (Original) A graft polymer composition according to claim 1, which has an acid value of not less than 2.0 meq/g.

4. (Original) A graft polymer composition according to claim 2, which has an acid value of not less than 2.0 meq/g.

5. (Amended) A graft polymer composition according to claim 1, wherein a graft polymer having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between~~ of the end structural units ~~composing of~~ both ends of the respective main chains of the at least two graft polymers accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the graft polymers.

6. (Amended) A graft polymer composition according to claim 2, wherein a graft polymer having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between~~ of the end structural units ~~composing of~~ both ends of the respective

main chains of the at least two graft polymers accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the graft polymers.

7. (Amended) A graft polymer composition according to claim 3, wherein a graft polymer having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between of the end structural units composing of both ends of the respective~~ main chains of the at least two graft polymers accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the graft polymers.

8. (Amended) A graft polymer composition according to claim 4, wherein a graft polymer having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between of the end structural units composing of both ends of the respective~~ main chains of the at least two graft polymers accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the graft polymers.

9. (Amended) A production process for a graft polymer composition, which comprises the step of adding a monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component to a mixture of at least two polyether compounds in order to graft-polymerize the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component at the same time onto the at least two polyether compounds, wherein the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component includes an unsaturated carboxylic monomer as an essential component;

~~wherein there is a difference of not less than 3 in the difference between the number of carbon atoms in the an end structural unit when the number of carbon atoms which compose each structural unit located at both ends is compared between the at least two~~

~~polyether compounds under the following conditions (i) and (ii) of a first of said polyether compounds and the number of carbon atoms in an end structural unit of a second of said polyether compounds is not less than 3 where:~~

- (i) ~~said end structural unit of a respective polyether compound is defined as a portion ranging extending from an extremely located~~ each end ~~ether bond portion to an end is defined as the end structural unit,~~ and when there is a difference in number of carbon atoms between ~~both~~ the end structural units of each respective polyether compound, whichever is larger is defined as the number of carbon atoms in the respective end structural unit; and
- (ii) ~~when an end is a structural unit is~~ derived from an alkylene oxide alone, the number of carbon atoms in ~~this~~ the respective end structural unit is defined as zero.

10. (Amended) A production process according to claim 9, wherein the number of carbon atoms in ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the smallest number of carbon atoms ~~among the of said end structural units composing both ends of each end~~ of the respective main chains of the at least two polyether compounds is not larger than 5.

11. (Original) A production process according to claim 10, wherein the resultant graft polymer composition has an acid value of not less than 2.0 meq/g.

12. (Amended) A production process according to claim 10, wherein a polyether compound having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between of the end structural units composing of both ends of the respective main chains of the at least two polyether compounds accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the polyether compounds.~~

13. (Amended) A production process for a graft polymer composition, which comprises the step of blending graft polymers (A) and (A') together, wherein:

the graft polymer (A) is obtained by graft-polymerizing a monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component onto a polyether compound (a) having an end structural unit, wherein the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component includes an unsaturated carboxylic monomer as an essential component; and

the graft polymer (A') is obtained by graft-polymerizing a monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component onto a polyether compound (a') having an end structural unit, wherein the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer component includes an unsaturated carboxylic monomer as an essential component;

wherein ~~there is a difference of not less than 3 in~~ the difference between the number of carbon atoms in the said end structural unit when the number of carbon atoms which compose each structural unit located at both ends is compared between the polyether compounds (a) and (a') under the following conditions (i) and (ii) of said polyether compound (a) and the number of carbon atoms in each end structural unit of said polyether compound (a') is not less than 3, where:

(i) said end structural unit of a respective polyether compound is defined as a portion ranging extending from an extremely located each end ether bond portion to an end is defined as the end structural unit, and when there is a difference in number of carbon atoms between both the end structural units of each respective polyether compound, whichever is larger is defined as the number of carbon atoms in the respective end structural unit; and

(ii) when an end ~~is a~~ structural unit is derived from an alkylene oxide alone, the number of carbon atoms in ~~this~~ the respective end structural unit is defined as zero.

14. (Amended) A production process according to claim 13, wherein the number of carbon atoms in ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the smallest number of carbon atoms ~~among the~~ of said end structural units ~~composing both ends of each end~~ of the respective main chains of the polyether compounds (a) and (a') is not larger than 5.

15. (Original) A production process according to claim 14, wherein the resultant graft polymer composition has an acid value of not less than 2.0 meq/g.

16. (Amended) A production process according to claim 14, wherein a polyether compound having ~~[[a]]~~ an end structural unit containing the largest number of carbon atoms ~~in comparison between the~~ of said end structural units ~~composing of~~ both ends of the respective main chains of the polyether compounds (a) and (a') accounts for not less than 30 weight % of the entirety of the polyether compounds.

17. (Original) A liquid-detergent builder, which comprises the graft polymer composition as recited in claim 1 as an essential component.

18. (Original) A liquid-detergent builder, which comprises the graft polymer composition as recited in claim 2 as an essential component.

19. (Original) A liquid detergent composition, which comprises the graft polymer composition as recited in claim 1 as an essential component.

20. (Original) A liquid detergent composition, which comprises the graft polymer composition as recited in claim 2 as an essential component.

21. (New) The graft polymer composition according to claim 1, wherein the number of carbon atoms of said end structural units is defined as zero when said polyether includes only hydroxy terminal end structural units.

22. (New) The process of claim 9, wherein the number of carbon atoms of said end structural units is defined as zero when said polyester includes only hydroxy terminal end structural units.

23. (New) The process of claim 13, wherein the number of carbon atoms of said end structural units is defined as zero when said polyether includes only hydroxy terminal end structural units.